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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 9182
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RUACAAA/COMUSKOREA INTEL SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J5 SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
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SUBJECT: ROK NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER PRESENTS
CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTION TO AMBASSADOR

REF: SEOUL 70

11. (SBU) On January 15, in front of tens of reporters, a smiling National Assembly Speaker Kim Hyung-o presented the Ambassador with the text of the resolution congratulating President-elect Obama that was passed January 13 (reftel). Kim emphasized that the resolution was endorsed unanimously by legislators from all parties and it was the first of its kind passed by the Korean legislature since 1952. The Ambassador presented Kim with a copy translated into Korean of President-elect Obama's autobiography, "Dreams from My Father," and Kim noted that Obama's election had inspired Korean youth and youth around the world to have hope and work toward their goals. The Ambassador and Kim agreed that the resolution sent a strong signal that good relations between our two countries and two peoples would continue and improve during the Obama Administration. End Summary

12. (SBU) Create Korea Party Chairman Moon Kuk-hyun accompanied National Assembly (NA) Speaker Kim Hyung-o in conveying the congratulatory resolution to the Ambassador on January 15. Moon, Chair of a minor party, was present at the event due to his role in drafting the resolution. The Speaker also presented cover letters to the President-elect, Vice President Cheney and Speaker Pelosi (emailed to EAP/K on Opennet.)

13. (SBU) Speaker Kim told the Ambassador during the cordial meeting that he had hoped Speaker Pelosi would visit Korea last year but understood that it was not possible due to the elections, and that he hoped she would be able to make a visit this year. After the press departed, Kim mentioned that both our countries had to work hard in 2009 on the KORUS FTA.

Comment

14. (SBU) Days removed from the resolution of acrimonious and violent battle that occurred in the Speaker's office and throughout the Assembly, the out-of-session NA was quiet and peaceful. The passage of the congratulatory resolution for the President-elect did not make much of a stir in the Korean press, highlighting the current universal, pro-Obama and pro-U.S. sentiment that are the accepted stance for all major parties.
STEPHENS